

American Indian and Alaska Native People

Keepers of Wisdom
To Strengthen the Hearts



Help your heart!

Strength, wisdom, and good health are American Indian birthrights. Our elders taught us many healthy ways that were practiced for many generations. Over time, some healthy traditions have been traded for unhealthy ways that increase the chances of getting some diseases.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives today. We can do something to prevent heart disease. One way to keep healthy is not to misuse tobacco.

Tobacco honors life

Tobacco has always been part of our culture. It is used to show respect and honor, and to seek protection on our daily travels. As a gift of the earth, tobacco should not be abused.

Harmful effects of tobacco

Chewing, dipping, and cigarette smoking are not the traditional ways to use tobacco. These ways can lead to heart attacks, cancer, and emphysema. If you chew or dip tobacco, your sense of taste and smell is reduced. If you smoke, your loved ones and you are likely to have more colds and coughs. The smoke from cigarettes can hurt the lungs and hearts of smokers and the people around them. So, if no one in your family smokes, all of you will be less likely to get sick.

So, if you are not smoking cigarettes, chewing, or dipping tobacco, don't start. If you

are—QUIT! Go to your local clinic for tips on how to quit smoking, chewing, or dipping tobacco.

Quitting smoking, dipping, or chewing tobacco in the best thing you can do for your family and yourself.



Celebrate good health! Healthy traditions prepare the hearts of tomorrow. Share this wisdom with your family and others.



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